

And that's the reason I think we have such a low approval rating in this country, because they view it as back-room deals, secret deals. This bill will eliminate all the sweetheart deals that are in this bill.

I ask my colleagues to join me in eliminating sweetheart deals in the current health care legislation.

THE AMT ADJUSTMENT ACT

(Mr. HALL of New York asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. HALL of New York. Mr. Speaker, a critical component of our economic recovery is tax relief for our middle class. I rise today to urge my colleagues to support the AMT Adjustment Act, which eliminates the AMT from the lives of most middle class families and greatly reduces it for the rest.

In places with a high cost of living like New York's Hudson Valley, more and more middle class taxpayers find themselves paying the excessive AMT. We must restore balance to the Tax Code and prevent this millionaire's tax from hitting the middle class for once and for all.

H.R. 5077 increases the amount of income exempt from the AMT and permanently fixes the tax by indexing it to the cost of living. Tax day is bad enough already, and it shouldn't have big surprises to the tune of thousands of dollars our families have to pay.

Congress must stand up for the middle class. I urge support for this bill.

THE ADMINISTRATION AND ISRAEL

(Mr. ROGERS of Alabama asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. ROGERS of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my serious concern about the way the administration is dealing with Israel and how destructive I think their behavior is to our relationship.

I would like to remind the administration that the overwhelming majority of the Members of Congress, Democrat and Republican, but more importantly the overwhelming majority of Americans, fiercely support our friend Israel and expect the administration to reflect that in their behavior.

We have had this President go to Saudi Arabia and to Egypt to reemphasize how important it is to improve relations with the Muslim nations. He didn't visit Israel while he was over there to emphasize how important it was to keep and maintain support for our relationship with that Jewish State.

We have had Vice President BIDEN go there and condemn the construction of apartments in Jerusalem. Secretary Clinton did the same thing. Vice President BIDEN was an hour and a half late for a dinner with the Prime Minister.

How disrespectful. When President Obama met with Netanyahu in the White House and had dinner with him, he walked out on that dinner. How disrespectful.

We expect more from our President when it comes to dealing with Israel than just disrespect. We expect a re-emphasis of our support for Israel.

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EQUAL PAY DAY

(Ms. PINGREE of Maine asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. PINGREE of Maine. Mr. Speaker, this week we marked Equal Pay Day, a day when we recognize the unequal pay of women in this country. Today, women still only make 77 cents to every dollar earned by men. But this disparity is not a women's issue. It's a family issue.

There are just as many women as there are men in the workforce now, and women are the breadwinner or co-breadwinner in about two-thirds of all American families. That is why all of us, men and women alike, have such a big stake in eliminating this gap.

I was proud that my first speech as a freshman in this body was in support of the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act and when that legislation became the first bill that President Obama signed after taking office. I was proud when Maine had Lilly Ledbetter herself to visit our State last month. And I am proud of the fact that Maine has passed a comparable worth law and made great strides towards ending pay discrimination in our own State.

But for all we have to be proud of, we have so much more to do because when women are paid less, everybody suffers.

END BAILOUTS ONCE AND FOR ALL

(Ms. FOXX asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. FOXX. What's the difference between an "orderly liquidation fund" and a taxpayer-funded bailout? There is no difference.

Senate Democrats say they need \$50 billion to create a new fund so the government can "wind down" failing financial firms. House Democrats want \$100 billion more. Both bills increase taxes on consumers at a time when they can least afford it.

Once the bailout fund is in place, government bureaucrats will decide which Wall Street firms are too big to fail, and then they'll use your hard-earned dollars to pay off the firm's creditors. Sound familiar? It's what they did for companies like AIG with the \$700 billion TARP bailout.

Now Democrats are pushing "TARP Two." They want to give the government the power of a permanent bailout fund to get back in the game of decid-

ing which of their Wall Street friends to rescue. And their bill does nothing about Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac—the two enterprises at the heart of the economic meltdown.

Republicans have better solutions. Our measure deals with Fannie and Freddie and places failed firms into bankruptcy. It also provides better and smarter regulatory reform, stops the policy of "too big to fail," and protects taxpayers by ending bailouts once and for all.

EARTH DAY

(Ms. SPEIER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. SPEIER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today on the 40th anniversary of Earth Day to support the millions of people around the world who are dedicating their time and service to protecting our environment. I commend all of our citizens for their efforts to clean up our environment, but most of all, I look forward to seeing what we in Congress will do to support them.

I hope this will include passage of legislation I've recently introduced that will restore and protect the largest estuary on the west coast—the San Francisco Bay and its watersheds, which are a national treasure and a resource of worldwide significance.

I also encourage all of us to stand with our constituents this week who are lending their time and service to activities to clean up our environment. One town in my district expects over 5,000 people to dedicate their day to clean up the local shoreline. Earth Day is truly about service, and it's a great opportunity for friends and neighbors to come together on behalf of our planet.

BAILOUT CULTURE

(Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas. With all of this talk about another big bank bailout and protecting companies that are too big to fail, I think we need to bring things back into perspective. The government should not be in the business of picking winners and losers—especially not at the expense of the American taxpayer.

America was built on freedom and free enterprise. Our Founding Fathers never envisioned a Big Brother government so entrenched in the private sector that it would prop up companies like Fannie and Freddie, rescue Wall Street, bail out AIG, and own car companies. What incentive does a corporation have to be responsible to its employees, customers, communities, and shareholders if it knows Uncle Sam is going to be there to pick up the pieces when it falls apart?

With unemployment at 10 percent and companies hesitant to hire new